

DRAFT

CALFED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT POLICY

January 8, 1997

The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop and implement a continuing long term comprehensive plan to restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system. The CALFED alternatives are intended to provide a comprehensive solution to the problems of a declining ecosystem, uncertain water supplies, and imperiled water quality. The problems of the Bay-Delta are interrelated and require an integrated approach to restore and protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

Watershed management is incorporated into each of the three alternative CALFED Bay-Delta solutions as a means of improving water quality, including sources of drinking water, improving fisheries and overall ecosystem health, and increasing water yield and system reliability.

A primary role of CALFED is to coordinate the solution of Bay-Delta estuary problems on a large scale. CALFED watershed management will be an outgrowth of this role, emphasizing the efforts of other public agencies and private entities, and seeking to help coordinate these efforts on a regional basis, as appropriate to the defined boundaries of CALFED activities. CALFED will solicit advice from local, State and federal agencies to support cost-effective watershed-based management programs.

CALFED supports sound scientific investigations and pilot programs to develop and demonstrate methods for protecting and enhancing beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta Ecosystem. An important component of CALFED support for programs is to assure development of adequate technical documentation to support decision-making in a long-term adaptive management process.

Emphasis for CALFED involvement will be placed on activities which most benefit the estuary and species dependent on the estuary, where local partnerships exist, where projects have been well studied, and where a local project management infrastructure exists. Also, CALFED involvement will be consistent with its solution principles of reducing conflict, and having equity, affordability, durability, implementability, and a lack of significant redirected impacts. Other criteria such as technical, economic, financial, and institutional feasibility will also be considered for any CALFED watershed management project.

CALFED watershed activities will be implemented on two levels. The first level will include projects within the CALFED geographic solution area that have direct benefits to the Bay-Delta estuary. The second level will include projects that may lie within or outside the CALFED solution area, and that may have direct or indirect benefits to the estuary. An example of a first level project might be share funding with a local conservancy group to reduce pollution in storm water entering the Delta from the lower stem of the Sacramento or San Joaquin Rivers.

An example of a second level activity might include a cooperative project with forest management and local conservation agencies to restore aquatic ecosystems and increase base flows into upstream reservoirs. In all such activities it will be the CALFED role to assist implementation of projects on a larger watershed scale than might be possible among local entities.

CALFED watershed management activities will be fully coordinated with existing or new watershed management programs affecting the Bay Delta Estuary including, but not limited to, the State Water Resources Control Board's Sacramento River Watershed Program, the Sacramento County and City's Sacramento River Toxic Pollutant Control Program, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Watershed Initiative Program.

0108WSHE